DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 097 097 PS 007 159

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Peters, Donald L. |
| TITLE | Day Care Homes: A Pennsylvania Profile. Center for Human Services Development Report No. 18. |
| INSTITUTION | Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park. Coll. of Human Development. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Pennsylvania State Dept. of Public Welfare, Harrisburg. |
| REPORT NO | PSU-CHSD-R-18 |
| PUB DATE | Dec 72 |
| NOTE | 44p.; For other reports in this series, see PS 007 154-164 |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.75 HC-$1.85 PLUS POSTAGE |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Day Care Programs; *Day Care Services; Ethnic Distribution; Exceptional Child Services; Family Characteristics; *Family Environment; *Federal Aid; Learning Activities; Observation; Physical Environment; *Rural Urban Differences; Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Characteristics |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Family Day Care; Pennsylvania |

ABSTRACT

This report presents a preliminary profile of home day care in Pennsylvania. Information was gathered through extensive questionnaires and home observations which occurred during site visits to a geographically-representative sample of 162 licensed or approved day care homes. In the profile, comparisons are made between 146 homes which are privately funded and the 16 programs which receive aid through the provisions of the Social Security Act, Title IV-A. Comparisons are also made for areas of different population densities. Descriptive data are presented in these areas: (1) child characteristics such as levels of enrollment, age groupings, and ethnic background; (2) special services for school-age children and exceptional children; (3) length of child care, withdrawal, and absences; (4) family characteristics; (5) formal and informal training and experience of day care mothers; (6) physical environments--indoor and outdoor; (7) educational and play activities, materials, and equipment; and (8) atmosphere, including verbal and physical contact between day care mothers and children, amount of time spent with children, imposition of rules and restrictions, and response to children's needs. A summary and discussion of the major findings conclude the report. (Author/SDH)

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED 097097

# INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

## CENTER FOR HUMAN SERVICES DEVELOPMENT

DAY CARE HOMES: A PENNSYLVANIA PROFILE

By Donald L. Peters

December, 1972
CHSD Report No. 18

PS 007159

COLLEGE OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY PARK, PA. 16802

Copyright © 1972

The Pennsylvania State University

Center for Human Services Development

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Pa. State Univ.

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A report of this kind is clearly the result of the assistance and cooperation of many people.

First, I would like to extend my thanks to the 162 day care home mothers of the study sample. Their willingness to open their homes to the project staff made the study possible.

The field staff of the study included: Barbara Anson, Stuart Biddle, Priscilla Doak, Geraldine Green, Barbara Grieco, Joanna Noel, Peggy Perrone, Lois Rearick, June Stacey, Bettie Thomas, Barbara Wood, and Barbara Snyder. The coordinators of the field staff were Metta Winter and Catherine Van der Kar.

Data processing was handled by Rosemary Hollick, Kevin Knowles, Gordon Williams, and Mike Rudnick.

TABLE OF CONTENTS


| Topic | Page |
|---|---|
| ABSTRACT | iii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | iv |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| METHODS | 3 |
| Sample | 3 |
| Procedures | 5 |
| RESULTS | 5 |
| Characteristics of the Children | 6 |
| Age Groups | 6 |
| Ethnic Background | 7 |
| Exceptional Children | 8 |
| Stability of Enrollment and Care | 9 |
| Characteristics of Families | 12 |
| Training and Experience of the Day Care Mother | 14 |
| Environment | 16 |
| Indoor | 16 |
| Outdoor | 18 |
| The Program | 20 |
| Daily Routine | 21 |
| Atmosphere | 25 |
| Children's Behavior | 25 |
| Day Care Mothers' Behavior | 26 |
| SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION | 30 |
| Summary of Findings | 30 |
| Discussion | 31 |
| REFERENCES | 37 |
| APPENDIX A | 38 |


TABLES


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Table 1 | Total Number of Day Care Homes in Each Region of Pennsylvania and the Study Sample | 4 |
| Table 2 | Different Levels of Enrollment in the Day Care Homes | 6 |
| Table 3 | Number of Children in Different Age Groupings | 6 |

| Topic | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Table 4 | Percentage of Programs Reporting Services for School Age Children | 7 |
| Table 5 | Percentage of Day Care Homes Reporting the Enrollment of Different Ethnic Groups | 8 |
| Table 6 | Percentage of Day Care Homes Providing Care for Exceptional Children | 9 |
| Table 7 | Percentages of Day Care Homes Citing Different Reasons for Child Withdrawal | 10 |
| Table 8 | Percentages of Homes Reporting Different Reasons for Child Absences | 11 |
| Table 9 | Percentages of Day Care Homes Reporting Care of Children for Various Lengths of Time | 11 |
| Table 10 | Number of Children Coming from Different Family Patterns | 13 |
| Table 11 | Programs Reporting Families on Public Assistance | 14 |
| Table 12 | Percentage of Day Care Mothers Reporting Formal or Informal Training and Experience | 15 |
| Table 13 | Percentage of Day Care Mothers Participating in Specialized Training of Different Types | 15 |
| Table 14 | Percentage of Programs with Different Observed Ratings of Available Space for Indoor Play | 16 |
| Table 15 | Percentage of Programs with Differing Numbers of Barriers to Free Movement | 17 |
| Table 16 | Percentage of Programs Reported to Have Child-Size Furnishings or Materials | 17 |
| Table 17 | Percentage of Homes Displaying Children's Art Work | 18 |
| Table 18 | Percentage of Homes with Differential Availability of Outdoor Play Space | 19 |
| Table 19 | Amount and Variety of Outdoor Equipment | 20 |

| Topic | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Table 20 | Observed Frequency of Various Kinds of Educational or Play Activities | 22 |
| Table 21 | Number of Programs Rated for Different Levels of Availability and Variety of Play Materials | 23 |
| Table 22 | Percentage of Programs Reporting Child Involvement in various Food Related Activities | 24 |
| Table 23 | Number of Homes Rated at Different Level of Child's Activity Involvement and Noise | 26 |
| Table 24 | Ratings of Verbal and Physical Contact Between Day Care Mothers and the Children in their Care | 27 |
| Table 25 | Ratings of Amount of Day Care Mothers' Time Spent with Children | 28 |
| Table 26 | Ratings of Homes on Rules and Restrictions | 28 |

# DAY CARE HOMES: A PENNSYLVANIA PROFILE

Donald L. Peters

The Pennsylvania State University

## INTRODUCTION

There are an estimated 46,300 licensed day care centers and family day care homes serving about 638,000 children in the United States. There are also an estimated 450,000 unlicensed and unregulated family day care homes serving 720,000 children (Rosenberg, 1972). According to these estimates only about 44% of the 1,300,000 preschool children in formal day care settings are sent to day care centers, while about 56% are cared for in family day care homes. Yet, we know remarkably little about the type or quality of care provided by the day care home.

What little we know derives from a few large-scale, but cursory, surveys and a few limited-sample pieces of research. These efforts present a rather mixed picture of what home day care is all about. At its best, home day care may provide warm and secure care for children (Fitzsimmons, 1971), but at its worst, it can be pretty grim. For example, Pines (1966) reported a series of anecdotes of children being neglected or abused by untrained, drunken, or sick day care workers. Pines also reported that, among New York City unlicensed homes, 34% lacked play materials of any kind, 25% never took the children out-of-doors, and 84% of the facilities were rated as inadequate because they violated health codes or because the children were seriously neglected.

When compared to day care centers, day care homes have certain advantages. Grotberg (1971) presented the following general summary of

the advantages of the day care home:

a. Home care tends to be warm and responsible (Prescott & Jones, 1969; Fitzsimmons, 1971).

b. Home care is better able to serve sick children and children with special problems, as well as infants and toddlers.

c. Home care is usually in the neighborhood where the child lives so that transportation is not necessary (Sale & Torres, 1971; Emlen & Watson, 1970). Further, parents give priority to care arrangements close to home (Massachusetts Early Education Project Survey, 1971).

d. School age children can be watched after school by the same day care mother who minds the family's younger children.

e. Children are not removed from their neighborhood peer group.

f. Most day care homes have mixed age groups of both day care and natural children.

g. Day care homes may provide greater continuity of care (Collins, 1966).

h. Day care home mothers tend to be more "child centered" (Emlen & Watson, 1970; Collins, 1966).

The greatest weakness noted in most reports is that day care homes offer few planned educational experiences for children.

On the whole, day care homes are about as expensive to operate as day care centers. The annual cost per child in day care homes meeting Health, Education & Welfare standards for different levels of quality have been estimated to be the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| Minimum Standards | $1,423 |
| Acceptable Standards | 2,032 |
| Desirable Standards | 2,372 |

[Grotberg, Chapman & Lazar, 1971]

The choice of day care home versus center facilities does seem to indicate preferences. More white mothers report that they would prefer to put their children in family day care homes, and black parents tend to prefer centers.

The reported preferences no doubt reflect the differential availability of such services. On a nation-wide basis 86% of the family day care mothers are white and 7% black. In day care centers 62% of the staff are white and 34% black.

In general, this review indicates the meagerness of our knowledge of day care home services. The present survey was designed to gain some understanding of home day care in Pennsylvania. It is descriptive in nature, and provides the first-look profile of Pennsylvania day care homes.

## METHODS

### Sample

The Pennsylvania Day Care Study Project has identified 1,614 day care homes in Pennsylvania to date (Williams & Rudnick, 1972). A listing was compiled from a variety of sources including: (a) the Department of Public Welfare Regional Office records, (b) information gathered through various auspice agencies, and (c) information provided by a variety of helpful organizations concerned with day care in their own counties, cities, or communities. The sources of information primarily identified programs which were licensed or approved. The 1,614 homes served approximately 6,430 children.

From this population of day care home operations a geographically representative 10% sample was drawn. The 162 homes selected served approximately 650 children.

Table 1 indicates the total number of homes identified in different regions of the state and the selected sample. As may be seen in this table the sample slightly underrepresents the central region.

TABLE 1

TOTAL NUMBER OF DAY CARE HOMES
IN EACH REGION OF PENNSYLVANIA
AND THE STUDY SAMPLE

| Region* | Number of homes identified | % | Sample | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| East | 788 | 49 | 90 | 55 |
| Central | 532 | 33 | 37 | 23 |
| West | 294 | 18 | 35 | 22 |
| Total | 1,614 | 100 | 162 | 100 |

*A listing of the counties in each region is found in Appendix A.

Some of the homes selected for visitation received financial aid, while others did not. Sixteen programs were supported through provisions of the Social Security Act, Title IV-A, primarily through slot purchases, and 146 received no funds from this source. Those receiving aid are referred to as IV-A homes and those which did not are called non-IV-A homes.

The homes also differed in that the density of the population in the areas in which they were located varied. Thirteen homes were from locales with fewer than 100 people per square mile. Sixty-five homes

were from locales with densities of 100 to 1,000 persons per square mile, and 84 were from high density areas (more than 1,000 person/square mile). Hence, 13 of the homes were from clearly rural areas and 84 were from clearly urban areas, while the rest belong somewhere in between. In the tables and analyses that follow the three density categories are referred to as low, medium, and high, respectively.

Procedures

The survey methods used in this study have been presented in detail elsewhere (Green et al., 1972). In general, they involved sending 14 field staff personnel to visit day care homes throughout the state. A 13-page questionnaire with both fixed alternative and open-ended questions was mailed to the day care homes in advance and were picked up and checked by the field staff upon arrival at the site. If the day care mothers had not completed the questionnaire prior to the arrival of the staff visitor, the field staff assisted with its completion. During the 1- to 3-hour visits, the field staff observed the program activities of the homes using a modification of the observation procedures discussed in Green, et al., 1972.

## RESULTS

Characteristics of the Children

Enrollment in the day care homes varied widely. The range was from 1 child to 18 children (not all full time). Table 2 provides a summary of the enrollment figures. From Table 2 it can be seen that the majority of the day care homes surveyed enrolled from 3 to 6 children.

TABLE 2

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ENROLLMENT
IN THE DAY CARE HOMES

| No. of children enrolled | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0-2 | 52 | 7 | 59 |
| 3-6 | 78 | 8 | 86 |
| Over 6 | 13 | 0 | 13 |
| Not reporting | 3 | 1 | 4 |

Age Groups. Table 3 provides a more detailed breakdown of the enrollments by the age of the children served. In all, 118 day care homes reported serving infants under 3 years of age. Only 28 programs provided care for children beyond the age of 6 years.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPINGS*

| Age of children | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 3 | 199 | 42 | 241 |
| 3-4 | 198 | 4 | 202 |
| 5-6 | 103 | 3 | 106 |
| Over 6 | 44 | 0 | 44 |

*Eight programs did not report enrollments.

It should be noted that the day care homes constituted supplementary services in some cases. For example, 1.4% of the non-IV-A homes reported taking care of children who were also enrolled in a day care center part

of the time. Twelve percent of the IV-A homes reported taking care of children enrolled part-time in another day care home as well. Seventeen of the homes reported taking care of children enrolled in half-day kindergarten programs. Forty-nine percent of the non-IV-A and 25% of the IV-A homes reported taking in nonenrolled children on an hourly babysitting arrangement.

While 48% of the non-IV-A and 88% of the IV-A programs reported providing no services for school age children, Table 4 indicates that some services were available.

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS REPORTING SERVICES
FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN

| Type of service | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Breakfast | 17 | 0 |
| Lunch | 22 | 6 |
| After school care | 24 | 6 |
| Summer program | 19 | 0 |

Ethnic Background. Table 5 indicates the percentage of day care homes reporting the enrollment of children of different ethnic backgrounds. The data show that 25% of the non-IV-A homes had no white children enrolled. Fifty-six percent of the IV-A homes had no white children enrolled. Eighty-two percent of the non-IV-A programs had no black children enrolled. Analysis of the same data by population density breakdown indicated that all of the funded homes were in moderate or

high density (urban) areas. All 13 of the low density area homes reported having only white children. In general, the data indicate that black and Spanish American children are more likely to be enrolled in IV-A day care homes, while white children are primarily found in non-IV-A homes.

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF DAY CARE HOMES REPORTING THE ENROLLMENT OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC GROUPS

| Ethnic group | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| American Indian | 1 | 0 |
| Black | 18 | 75 |
| Oriental | 1 | 0 |
| Spanish American | 1 | 13 |
| White | 76 | 44 |

Three percent of the non-funded homes reported having some bilingual children, while 19% of the funded homes reported enrollment of such children.

Exceptional Children. Table 6 summarizes the low percentages of day care homes reporting the care of children with developmental disabilities. No attempt was made to determine how these disabilities were diagnosed or by whom. Further, no data were collected as to the seriousness of the disabilities involved.

TABLE 6

PERCENTAGE OF DAY CARE HOMES PROVIDING
CARE FOR EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN

| Type of child | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Physically handicapped | 5 | 0 |
| Mentally retarded | 4 | 0 |
| Emotionally disturbed | 3 | 6 |

Stability of Enrollment and Care

From the data it is clear that the day care mothers of the sample refused care to some children during the preceeding year. Approximately 50% of the home mothers indicated that they refused to accept one or more children. The reasons cited for rejection ranged from transportation and fee problems (20% of the home mothers indicated such reasons) to an already full enrollment. Being full to capacity was indicated as a reason for not accepting additional children by 48% of the homes.

Transcience in the enrollment of a day care home is a concern because it has implications for both the possibilities of planning and implementing a developmental program and the overall stability of the care provided by the home. Apparently, the great majority of day care homes experienced some difficulty in this area. Some children left a program during the year. The major reasons for leaving are presented in Table 7.

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGES OF DAY CARE HOMES CITING
DIFFERENT REASONS FOR CHILD WITHDRAWAL

| Reasons | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Child too old | 34 | 25 |
| Family moved | 43 | 0 |
| Child returned to care of mother | 40 | 13 |
| Fee too high | 6 | 6 |
| Child moved to care elsewhere | 13 | 25 |
| Unknown | 3 | 6 |

Some children were absent from the programs for varying lengths of time. Table 8 indicates the percentages of homes reporting different reasons for such absences. Clearly child illness represented the major reason for periodic absences despite the fact that 63% of the non-funded homes and 31% of the funded homes indicated that they were capable of arranging for the care of sick children within the home.

Despite withdrawal and child absences, the data do indicate a reasonable degree of continuity in the care provided. Table 9 indicates the percentages of homes reporting children in their care for various lengths of time. These data suggest that a large proportion of children are in the care of a single day care home mother for periods of one year or more.

TABLE 8

PERCENTAGES OF HOMES REPORTING DIFFERENT REASONS FOR CHILD ABSENCES

| Reasons | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Illness | 66 | 94 |
| Transportation | 5 | 0 |
| Child with parent | 62 | 38 |
| Child reluctance | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 3 | 0 |

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGES OF DAY CARE HOMES REPORTING CARE OF CHILDREN FOR VARIOUS LENGTHS OF TIME

| Length of care | Non IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Under 6 mos. | 3 | 44 |
| 6-12 mos. | 40 | 38 |
| Over 1 yr. | 43 | 18 |
| Not reporting | 14 | 0 |

The data suggest some degree of stability in the care provided. The differences noted between IV-A and non-IV-A homes were probably attributable to two factors. First, on the whole, IV-A funded programs are relatively new and have not yet had time to develop the stability of the non-IV-A homes. Secondly, there are indications in the data which suggest that the relation between the day care service and the

parent are established differently for the two groups. Many parents of the IV-A homes come to the service through public agency referral. Such referral is less important in the non-IV-A programs, because the parents themselves are more likely to be involved in the selection of such a home for their children.

It should be noted that the high percentage of public agency referrals reported by the IV-A homes indicates that such homes constitute a more integral part of the total social service activities of the community and the commonwealth. Also, a greater percentage of such homes serve families on public assistance. The notion that IV-A homes are more integrally linked to the total social service system is also supported by the fact that 19% of IV-A homes but only 3% of non-IV-A homes would refer incidents of child abuse to a social worker.

The largest single parental complaint of parents of IV-A homes had to do with transportation problems (25% of IV-A homes reported such complaints) whereas with non-IV-A homes it did not seem to be as great a problem (8% of the non-IV-A funded reported such complaints). It seems that, when parents select their day care homes, transportation is not as much of a problem as when parents are referred by social service agencies.

Characteristics of Families

The day care mothers were asked if they thought that they were serving the people who needed their services the most. Eighty-seven percent of the non-funded day care home mothers and 94% of the funded home mothers felt they were. A look at the data concerning the families served seems to indicate that they are. The day care homes served both a large number of 1-parent families and a large number of families who had employed mothers.

Table 10 indicates the family structure of the children in the day care homes. From this table it may be seen that 58% of the families served by non-IV-A homes were intact families, whereas only 21% of the families served by IV-A homes were intact. The funded homes were serving more 1-parent families than any other type.

TABLE 10

NUMBER OF CHILDREN COMING FROM DIFFERENT FAMILY PATTERNS*

| Type of family | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mother only | 135 | 36 | 171 |
| Mother and father | 346 | 10 | 356 |
| Grandparent only | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Foster parents | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Other | 14 | 0 | 14 |

*Based upon responses from 144 programs.

Within the intact family groups, the great majority had an employed mother. For example, in the non-funded homes 306 out of 346 family groups were reported to have both mothers and fathers employed. The mother alone was the breadwinner in another 33 cases. Among the IV-A funded homes, nine out of ten cases were reported to have both parents working. For the 1-parent (mother only) families 127 of 135 cases in non-funded homes and 30 of 36 cases in funded homes were reported to have the mother employed. These data strongly support the contention that the clientele of day care homes are in need of day care services. Table 11 provides further information. In this

table it may be noted that only one IV-A home reported not having any families on public assistance. Approximately 30% of the day care homes having sufficient information reported serving from 1-6 public assistance families. Eighty percent of the IV-A programs with sufficient information reported serving such families. However, because of the small number of IV-A programs reporting it is unwise to generalize these results.

TABLE 11

PROGRAMS REPORTING FAMILIES ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

| No. of families | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| No families | 95 | 1 | 96 |
| 1-6 families | 27 | 4 | 31 |
| Don't know | 20 | 11 | 31 |
| No response | 4 | 0 | 4 |

Training and Experience of the Day Care Mother

Table 12 indicates the formal and informal experiences or training of the day care mothers of the sample. From Table 12 it is clear that the majority of day care home operators have had very limited formal experience or training in the care of young children.

Specialized inservice training had been provided in some cases. Table 13 indicates the percentage of day care home mothers reporting to have participated in such training. From this table it is clear that more special training is being provided for IV-A home operators than for non-IV-A home operators.

TABLE 12

PERCENTAGE OF DAY CARE MOTHERS REPORTING
FORMAL OR INFORMAL TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE*

| Type of experience/training | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Informal | | |
| Help in care of own siblings | 47 | 56 |
| Care of own children | 93 | 88 |
| Babysitting | 73 | 81 |
| Formal | | |
| Child care study - high school | 10 | 6 |
| Child care study - adult educ. | 2 | 0 |
| Child care study - college | 7 | 6 |
| Other | 32 | 25 |
| None | 1 | 6 |

*Percents do not add to 100% since respondents could indicate more than one form of prior experience.

TABLE 13

PERCENTAGE OF DAY CARE MOTHERS PARTICIPATING IN
SPECIALIZED TRAINING OF DIFFERENT TYPES

| Provider of training | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Department of welfare | 3 | 6 |
| Fee paying agency | 2 | 75 |
| Local college or university | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 2 | 38 |

The day care home operators were not overwhelmingly interested in more formal training. While many mothers requested ideas and assistance in planning activities for children, the data indicate that only 42% of the non-funded home operators and 38% of the funded home operators actually expressed interest in receiving additional formal training.

Environment

The adequacy of the physical environment of the day care home has been questioned by several investigators, particularly as it meets health standards. While such health standard criteria are important, the focus of concern in this study was the adequacy of the physical environment in providing (a) stimulation for children and (b) support for the planning and implementation of a developmental care program.

Indoor. Across all areas of different population density, the indoor space was, for the most part, adequate to abundant (see Table 14). However, as population density increased, indoor space became more cramped. Almost one-fourth of the urban programs were reported to have cramped facilities.

TABLE 14

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS WITH DIFFERENT OBSERVED RATINGS OF AVAILABLE SPACE FOR INDOOR PLAY

| Space rating | Population density | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High |
| Abundant | 15 | 35 | 29 |
| Moderate | 69 | 42 | 48 |
| Cramped | 15 | 22 | 23 |

Within the available space the number of barriers to free movement appears to have varied widely across day care homes. Table 15 provides the distribution by population density categories.

TABLE 15

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS WITH DIFFERING NUMBERS OF BARRIERS TO FREE MOVEMENT

| Number of barriers | Population density | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High |
| None | 31 | 38 | 38 |
| Some | 54 | 48 | 47 |
| Very many | 15 | 1' | 15 |

The data indicate that, while indoor space was generally adequate and unobstructed, few modifications had been made to adapt the setting for the care of additional children. Only approximately 30% of the homes of any type or population density category had any space specifically arranged for children's activities. In most cases there were neither child-size furnishings or materials of the type usually found in day care centers (Table 16) nor displays of children's art work (Table 17).

TABLE 16

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS REPORTED TO HAVE CHILD-SIZE FURNISHINGS OR MATERIALS

| Amount | Population density | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High |
| Little or no | 54 | 56 | 79 |
| Some | 23 | 37 | 15 |
| Great | 23 | 7 | 6 |

TABLE 17

PERCENTAGE OF HOMES DISPLAYING CHILDREN'S ART WORK

| Amount | Population density | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High |
| Much | 15 | 9 | 2 |
| Some | 23 | 6 | 5 |
| Little | 62 | 85 | 91 |

It should be noted that IV-A homes were observed to be more similar to day care centers in regards to child-size furnishings. Over 62% of such homes were reported to have some degree of such furnishings and materials. In this regard IV-A homes were somewhat better equipped for the care of children. It should be remembered, however, that many day care homes attempt to create a "homelike" environment for the children rather than a child-oriented "centerlike" environment.

Two other aspects of the indoor environment were observed as somewhat crude indicators of (a) the degree to which provision had been made for individual children and (b) the degree to which cultural and/or ethnic variations had been acknowledged. The data indicate that in virtually all programs (approximately 95%) no labeled spaces were provided in which individual children were to keep their clothes or small things. Similarly, little acknowledgement appeared to have been given to racial or cultural variety.

Outdoor. The great majority of day care homes appeared to have outdoor play space available to them. Table 18 indicates the percentages of homes

observed to have adjacent play space or play space within a reasonable walking distance. Lack of outdoor space was a problem for approximately 18% of the urban homes. All IV-A funded homes in the sample had outdoor play areas.

TABLE 18

PERCENTAGE OF HOMES WITH DIFFERENTIAL AVAILABILITY OF OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE

| Type | Population density | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Low | Medium | High |
| Adjacent | 92 | 83 | 63 |
| Walking distance | 8 | 8 | 12 |
| No outdoor space | 0 | 3 | 18 |

Where outdoor play areas were available, the vast majority were grass or grass plus some other surface. These conditions were found in 92% of the rural homes, 78% of the medium density area homes, and 57% of the urban homes. Approximately 55% of all homes had some portion of the play area shaded for the protection of the children.

Although outdoor play areas were available to most day care homes, the amount and variety of equipment and material observed for use out of doors was limited. Table 19 indicates the percentages of homes observed to have such things as bikes, jungle gyms, and so forth.

TABLE 19

AMOUNT AND VARIETY OF OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

| Category | Rating | Density area | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Outdoor equipment | | | | |
| Amount | Little or no | 54 | 31 | 37 |
| | Several pieces | 39 | 32 | 21 |
| | Large amount | 0 | 11 | 4 |
| Equipment | | | | |
| Variety | Little or no | 77 | 42 | 42 |
| | Several types | 15 | 28 | 18 |
| | Great variety | 0 | 3 | 2 |
| Outdoor materials | | | | |
| Amount | Little or no | 77 | 68 | 66 |
| | Several pieces | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| | Large amount | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Materials | | | | |
| Variety | Little or no | 85 | 70 | 68 |
| | Several types | 0 | 5 | 4 |
| | Great variety | 0 | 2 | 0 |

The Program

Information concerning the daily activities within the day care homes of the sample was obtained from both the questionnaires and from observations. Because the observers were not present during all the operating hours of the day care homes, only a small subsample of actual activities were observed. From the data, therefore, it was not possible to tell whether, when a

particular activity was not observed, it was because the activity was not a part of the home's program or because it simply did not occur during the hours the staff member was present.

Daily Routine. Fifty-six percent of the non-IV-A mothers and 69% of the IV-A mothers reported having a daily routine that they followed. For most programs this routine included snack and meal times and outdoor times.

Most of the homes took the children out every day. The time spent outdoors was reported to be more than one hour by 88% of the IV-A homes, while 49% of the non-IV-A homes reported outdoor times of more than one hour. Less than 10% of all programs had outdoor times of one-half hour or less. Most of the short outdoor times occurred in urban programs.

Where the children's arrival at the day care home was observed (N = 15 homes), 46% of the homes had no planned formal or informal educational or play activities set up and ready. In general, throughout the day, preplanned, set up indoor educational or play activities were the exception rather than the rule. Such activities were observed in only 30 of 162 programs.

Table 20 provides a summary of the number of homes in which various kinds of activities were observed. When the activities were observed, they tended to be more for the individual than the group. The programs were about equally divided on whether the child was permitted to move freely from one activity to another.

TABLE 20

OBSERVED FREQUENCY OF VARIOUS KINDS OF EDUCATIONAL OR PLAY ACTIVITIES

| Activity | No. of programs |
|---|---|
| Arts & crafts | 16 |
| Dramatization | 11 |
| Music | 10 |
| Stories | 6 |
| Formal lessons | 11 |
| Informal activities | 33 |
| T.V. | 56 |

The materials and equipment available for educational or play activities appeared to be frequently limited and lacking in variety. Table 21 summarizes the ratings in this area.

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF PROGRAMS RATED FOR DIFFERENT LEVELS OF AVAILABILITY AND VARIETY OF PLAY MATERIALS

| Area rating | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Amount of materials | | | |
| Little or no | 72 | 9 | 81 |
| Some | 41 | 6 | 47 |
| Large quantity | 31 | 0 | 31 |
| Variety of materials | | | |
| Little or no | 84 | 10 | 94 |
| Several types | 37 | 4 | 41 |
| Great variety | 23 | 1 | 24 |
| Amount of equipment | | | |
| Little or no | 59 | 9 | 68 |
| Some | 44 | 6 | 60 |
| Large amount | 41 | 1 | 42 |
| Variety of equipment | | | |
| Little or no | 78 | 9 | 87 |
| Several types | 39 | 5 | 44 |
| Great variety | 27 | 1 | 28 |

When looked at in terms of population density, it is clear that the urban day care homes were suffering from the greatest shortage of materials and equipment. Forty-four of the programs rated as having little or no equipment were from the urban areas.

Snack and other meal activities were observed in a number of programs. Several general characteristics of the routines involved were noted. For example, in 15 of the 23 programs observed, all children were served snacks at one time. In eight of the programs children could leave when finished, whether or not others were through. In all programs slow eaters were provided additional time. Meal times followed a similar pattern with 11 of 26 homes permitting children to leave while others were still eating; they also allowed slow eaters to have additional time. In all but one program children were permitted extra helpings if desired.

Questionnaire responses indicated that children were involved in various activities related to the planning, preparation, and serving of meals. Table 22 indicates the percentage of programs reporting such activities.

TABLE 22

PERCENTAGE OF PROGRAMS REPORTING CHILD INVOLVEMENT IN VARIOUS FOOD RELATED ACTIVITIES

| Activity | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes |
|---|---|---|
| Menu planning | 36 | 13 |
| Cooking | 6 | 6 |
| Serving | 19 | 13 |
| Clean up | 48 | 31 |

Actual observation indicated that children were involved in setting up for meals in only 3 of 20 cases, though they participated in serving (to some degree) in 11 of 20 cases. Children were involved in snack clean-up in 4 of 14 cases and in meal clean-up in 40 of 47 cases.

Formalized toileting routines were observed in ten day care homes. Such a procedure involved taking all children as a group to the bathroom at specific times during the day. In most homes the procedures were less formal. In 38 programs children were required to ask permission to go or were required to be accompanied by an adult. In the remainder of the homes no formal or semiformal procedures were noted.

Nap routines were observed in 30 day care homes. In six cases the children were permitted to quietly engage in other activities during the period. In 17 of the programs the day care mother took a break during this time.

Atmosphere

In an attempt to capture, at least crudely, the general tone or atmosphere of the day care homes, ratings and frequency counts of child and adult behavior were gathered.

Children's Behavior. In general, it appeared that the day care homes were relatively quiet, orderly places with most of the children engaged in some activity. Table 23 indicates the children's activity level, noise level, and degree of involvement.

The data also indicate that, with rare exceptions, there was a minimum of confusion in the programs. The children appeared to know what was expected of them, and they did it.

Children's behavior problems noted by the observers were minimal. Eleven cases of prolonged crying, one temper tantrum, and two cases of children displaying overt dislike for the day care mother were noted. These represented a very small fraction of the over 650 children involved in the sample.

TABLE 23

NUMBER OF HOMES RATED AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF CHILD'S ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT AND NOISE

| Rating | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Motor activity level | | | |
| High | 32 | 1 | 33 |
| Moderate | 39 | 8 | 47 |
| Low | 47 | 6 | 53 |
| Degree of involvement | | | |
| High | 65 | 3 | 68 |
| Moderate | 54 | 7 | 61 |
| Low | 17 | 5 | 22 |
| Noise | | | |
| Loud | 12 | 0 | 12 |
| Normal | 73 | 7 | 80 |
| Quiet | 56 | 8 | 64 |

Day Care Mothers' Behavior. One indication of the degree of "child centeredness" in a day care home is the degree to which the day care mother shows obvious enjoyment in her work with children. Another is

the degree to which she actually interacts with the children in her program. In 94 of 162 cases the mothers showed obvious enjoyment in their work. In only six cases did they show no enjoyment or actual dislike for their work with children. Table 24 indicates the degree of verbal and physical contact that the day care mothers had with the children. The data suggest that in some homes there is little verbal or physical contact between the home mother and the children.

TABLE 24

RATINGS OF VERBAL AND PHYSICAL CONTACT BETWEEN DAY CARE MOTHERS AND THE CHILDREN IN THEIR CARE

| Type & rating | Non-IV-A homes | IV-A homes | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Verbal | | | |
| High | 11 | 1 | 12 |
| Moderate | 105 | 8 | 113 |
| Little | 24 | 7 | 31 |
| Physical | | | |
| High | 39 | 7 | 46 |
| Moderate | 50 | 9 | 59 |
| Minimal | 51 | 0 | 51 |

Another way of assessing the same thing is to rate the actual time that the mothers spent with the children. Table 25 summarizes these findings. It might be noted that 60% of the homes in which the mother was rated as spending more time with other things than the children were urban homes.

The amount of "structure" in a day care home program is indicated, to some degree, by the number of rules and restrictions imposed upon the children. Table 26 indicates the ratings of programs on this dimension. It can be seen that for the most part a mimimum of structure was noted.

TABLE 25

RATINGS OF AMOUNT OF DAY CARE MOTHERS' TIME SPENT WITH CHILDREN

| Rating | No. of Mothers |
|---|---|
| Time almost entirely involved with children | 80 |
| Spends half time with children; half time with other things | 52 |
| Time more involved with other things than with children | 25 |

TABLE 26

RATINGS OF HOMES ON RULES AND RESTRICTIONS

| Type | Rating | No. of Homes |
|---|---|---|
| Adult imposed rules on use of materials: | High | 20 |
| | Moderate | 32 |
| | Minimal | 90 |
| Adult imposed rules on behavior: | High | 39 |
| | Moderate | 45 |
| | Minimal | 69 |

The method by which these rules and restrictions were imposed added to the "atmosphere" of the program. For example, it was found that in 43 of the homes the mother's requests and directions were stated primarily in negative terms (e.g., "Don't walk on the grass, Don't eat with your fingers"). In 51 of the programs the directions were primarily stated in positive terms (e.g., "Eat with your fork"). Further, in only 25 homes were the mothers rated as consistently explaining the reasons for rules or restrictions to the children. In 83 of the homes the mothers were rated as seldom or never explaining the rules. In 43 cases the mothers were observed to resolve conflicts between children over toys or equipment by arbitrarily making decisions. In only 18 cases did the day care mother help the children to work it out themselves. In 35 of the homes the mothers were observed to give the children a lot of praise and encouragement. In 71 programs little or no praise or encouragement was observed. In some cases it would seem that when rules and restrictions were imposed, they tend to be arbitrary and learned primarily through their violation.

The home mother's response to a variety of children's needs is also revealing. For example, in 59 of 162 homes the mother was rated as doing very little to encourage exploration and curiosity. In three programs day care mothers were observed to consistently ignore children's requests for materials or assistance. In nine homes the mothers were rated as seldom or never responding to a child's verbal request for attention; they also showed little or no concern for comforting a child in obvious distress. It should be remembered, however, that these instances represented a minority of day care homes.

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

### Summary of Findings

1. The majority of the day care homes enrolled 3 to 6 children.
2. A total of 241 children below the age of 3 were enrolled in 118 homes.
3. Twenty-eight programs provided care for children beyond the age of 6.
4. Day care homes did provide some supplementary services to children enrolled in other day care facilities or kindergarten and to those who needed hourly babysitting.
5. A moderate number of homes provided meals after school, or summer services to school age children.
6. A small percentage of homes served children with developmental disabilities.
7. Homes appeared to provide a reasonable degree of continuity in child care.
8. Homes appeared to be serving the people who needed child care. The great majority of the children came from 1-parent homes or from homes where both parents were actively employed.
9. The day care mothers had had little or no formal training in child care.
10. The physical environment of most homes provided adequate indoor and outdoor space, but there was little, if any, adaptation to child care use.

11. Most homes had little equipment or materials for either indoor or outdoor use.
12. Preplanned educational and/or play activities were the exception rather than the rule.
13. The overall atmosphere was relatively quiet and orderly. The majority of homes were "child centered," with both physical and verbal contact taking place between the day care mother and the children in her care.
14. In most cases day care mothers were found to be paying attention to the children, talking to them, and caring for their needs.
15. Restrictions and rules were observed to be imposed infrequently.
16. Urban programs were found to have the least adequate environment, the most negative atmosphere, and to be the most underequipped.
17. In general, IV-A programs differed most from non-IV-A in the clientele they served (generally, lower income, black or spanish American families), in the continuity of the care they provided (shorter duration), and in the training received by the day care mothers (more).

## Discussion

In this, as in other studies, both the strengths and weaknesses of home day care were evident. Consistent with previous findings (Emlen & Watson, 1970; Collins, 1966) the results indicate that the care provided by Pennsylvania day care homes is basically "child-centered," stable, and warm. A large percentage of the children stay in the care of a

single day care mother for a year or more. To the degree that day care homes are selected by the parents themselves, the care provided is convenient and consistent with that provided in the child's own home. The day care mothers, for the most part, seem to enjoy the care of children, and the children are not noticably unhappy or disturbed.

The day care homes seemed to meet very real needs in their communities. The vast majority of the families served were either 1-parent families or families which had both parents employed. Further, the day care homes had enrolled a substantial number of children under the age of 3 years. As such, the day care home is providing services not available through other institutions in the community. The day care homes also reported having the capability of caring for sick children. However, this potential service does not seem to be used to any great extent at this time.

The day care home mother is the key element in the provision of quality home day care services. In many ways she is a major agent in the development of the children in her charge. How she sees her role, how she is prepared for it, and how she is assisted in carrying it out determines, to a great extent, the success of the services she provides and ultimately the physical, emotional and intellectual health of the children in her care.

The vast majority of home mothers saw themselves as babysitters and not as having any major responsibilities for the education or development of the children in their charge. For many the work was not even considered as a legitimate paying job. The primary concern of most of the mothers was to provide for the physical well-being of the child and to make him happy. Most mothers felt that this attitude was a natural consequence of "loving" the child. Some day care mothers reported to our interviewers that parents

objected to their "teaching." These parents wanted warmth, affection, and protection for their children. If they had wanted them taught, they would have put them in nursery schools or day care centers.

This view is consistent with the basic conception of the day care home as a substitute home for children. For the day care mother, and for the children in her care, it is their home. The atmosphere is homelike and is not perceived as a school or center.

While this view has much merit, it could be argued that the day care home mothers themselves were not entirely satisfied with it. Our interviewers reported that over and over again the mothers voiced an urgent need for "ideas" and "things" to do with children. They expressed a need for more chilren's play area and for more equipment. In some cases they did not know where to buy equipment and materials, nor did they know how to make "homemade" materials.

These informal findings suggest that the question concerning the desire for more training was too formally phrased. Since the day care home mothers did not see themselves as teachers, they did not see the need for courses or "training," but they did see a need for help in "enriching" their home environment with materials, activities, and equipment.

In most cases expense seemed to be another major inhibiting factor for the day care mothers. Since their pay was low and they were seldom given money for equipment, most could not afford to expand the amount and variety of equipment and materials available even if they would have liked to.

The great pride that many home mothers expressed concerning the "improvements" they saw in the children while in their care also reflects their concern with making a "difference" in the children's lives. Some

home mothers expressed this pride by explaining that the children behaved "better" with them than with the children's own parents.

The homelike conditions provided in day care homes undoubtedly supplies a secure and familiar atmosphere in which children may develop. It also is likely to reduce the concerns that some working mothers have about their failure to live up to cultural standards as mothers and homemakers (Sibbison, 1972). In such a setting adaptation of the environment to children's activities may be less appropriate than in the day care center setting.

It may also be less appropriate for the day care mother to adapt her daily activities to those of the children. Most home mothers in our sample felt little need to participate in the children's play and felt it was legitimate, instead, for them to engage in other homemaking activities. It is probably true that neither the day care mother nor the parents of the children in her care expected that she would devote her full attention to the children at all times. In this respect she was regarded as a mother substitute with other calls on her time. If the home mother is inventive in stimulating activities the children can carry on independently, she may certainly carry on other activities without failing in her responsibilities nor neglecting the children. However, as expressed previously, some form of assistance or informal training may be required in the area of preparing the day care mother for her role.

Within the conception of the day care home held by the day care mothers, there is still room for the planning and organizing of activities to be carried out by the children independently or with the direction or assistance of the mother. Most authorities would agree that the intellectual, social, and emotional development of children in the age range served by day care

homes is in a very formative stage. Since the day care mother may have more waking contact with the children in her care than anyone else, she must assume some responsibility for the nature and direction of development. It seems undesirable to allow all environmental influence to remain unplanned and due to chance. Rather, it would seem important that developmental planning become a part of home day care operations. That is, day care homes should have some degree of program for the children enrolled. Here, again, the day care mother will need assistance and training if she is to see the importance of her role in the children's development and to plan her activities with this in mind.

Finally, most of the home mothers felt a lack of those supportive services which are normally provided to other forms of child care. They expressed a variety of difficulties with children's parents, including collection of fees, locating parents in emergencies, dealing with parents who, they felt, neglected their children, and so forth. Essentially, they did not often feel a part of the larger social service network and had little recourse when faced with problems. For IV-A homes this lack of support was less of a problem than for non-IV-A homes. The former, either because their existence was known by other social service agencies or because of their own initiative, were more integrally related to the overall system. To improve the operations of day care homes and relieve the burden on day care home mothers, it seems advisable that efforts be undertaken to incorporate day care homes into the community-coordinated child care concept.

The results and opinions expressed in this section should all be considered tentative. The data of the study have not yet received the kind

of careful, in-depth analysis they deserve. Moreover, the study itself is just a beginning towards understanding the operations and effects of day care homes.

## REFERENCES

Collins, A. Some efforts to improve private family day care. Children, 1966, 13, 135.

Emlen, A. and Watson, E. Matchmaking in neighborhood day care: A descriptive study of the day care neighbor service. Portland, Oregon: Tri-county community council, 1970.

Fitzsimmons, S. A study in child care 1970-71 volume I: Findings. Cambridge, Mass.: Abt Associates, 1971.

Green, R., Hollick, R., Knowles, K., Van der Kar, C., and Winter, M. The Pennsylvania day care study survey questionnaire and observation report. The Pennsylvania Day Care Study, Technical Report #9, June, 1972.

Grotberg, E. Day care: Resources for decisions. Washington, D. C.: Office of Economic Opportunity, 1971.

Grotberg, E., Chapman, T., and Lazar, J. A review of the present status and future needs in day care research. Washington, D. C., Office of Economic Opportunity, 1971.

Massachusetts Early Education Project Survey, Nichols House, Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass., 1971.

Pines, M. Day care: The problem nobody wants to face. In M. Pines Revolution in learning, New York: Harper and Row, 1966.

Prescott, E. and Jones, E. Group day care as a child rearing environment. Pacific Oaks College, Pasadena, California, 1969.

Sale, J. and Torres, Y. I'm not just a babysitter: A descriptive report of the community family day care project. Washington, D. C., Children's Bureau, 1971.

Sibbison, V. The influence of maternal role perception on attitudes toward and utilization of early child care services. Unpublished master's thesis, The Pennsylvania State University, 1972.

Williams, G. and Rudnick, M. Roster of day care homes in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Day Care Study: Technical Report #8, June, 1972.

## APPENDIX A

### List of Regions and Counties Contained Therein

| Region | Counties |
|---|---|
| East | Berks, Bradford, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Luzerne, Monroe, Montgomerey, Northampton, Philadelphia, Pike, Schuylkill, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wayne, Wyoming. |
| Central | Adams, Bedford, Blair, Cambria, Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Perry, Snyder, Somerset, Union, York. |
| West | Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Crawford, Elk, Erie, Fayette, Forrest, Greene, Indiana, Jefferson, Lawrence, McKean, Mercer, Potter, Venango, Warren, Washington, Westmoreland. |